







Selections from the Poems of Abraham Cowley

Begin, be bold, and venture to be wise:
He, who delays this work from day to day,
Does on a river's bank expecting stay
Till the whole stream that stopped him shall be gone,
Which runs, and as it runs, for ever shall run on.

Cowley

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Till the whole stream that stopped has shell be gone. Which rate, and rette on an





Abraham Cowley

Poems of Abraham Cowley selected & edited by & & Katharine B. Locock & &

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PREFACE

The reputation of "the ingenious Mr Cowley" has undergone more surprising changes than that of perhaps any other English poet. Classed by his contemporaries with Spenser. Shakespeare and Jonson, his fame fell steadily during the course of the next hundred years, until at last Pope was able to inquire, "Who now reads Cowley?" while at the present day he is practically unknown except to the student. Yet his merits have never lacked recognition among the elect. Addison eulogised his wit; Hazlitt spoke of his inexhaustible fund of ingenuity and good sense; Lamb counted his name as one which carried a perfume in the mention: Leigh Hunt spoke of his Anacreontiques as breathing the very spirit of the Greek original: quite recently Mr Beeching, in Conferences on Books and Men, has added his testimony to the poet's worth. Surely then there must be something in Cowley's verse that may appeal to the reader of to-day, and the present selection aims at placing before the public the best examples of his art, extracted from a mass of material which either appealed only to contemporary taste, or was the ambitious work of a youth who had not yet realised the true bent of his genius.

Of Cowley's life it is unnecessary to say much here, since its most important facts are indicated in the Essay Of Myself, which is prefixed to these selections. It seems to have been a mixture of poetry and politics. Cowley was a devoted though prudent Royalist, and during some ten or

twelve years rendered useful service to the King's party, on account of which he suffered certain disabilities. Afterwards he appears to have made concessions to the party in power, but so far as can be ascertained they were not such as to reflect seriously upon his honour.

The Restoration failed to satisfy the hopes of political preferment in which Cowley had indulged, and about the same time disappointment arising from the ill-success of his play The Cutter of Coleman Street tended to increase that love of retirement and solitude which had always been one of his characteristics. He retired to Barn Elms and afterwards to Chertsey, where he devoted himself to country pleasures and to the composition of the work, by which he is now best known, Several Discourses by way of Essays in Prose and Verse. He died at Chertsey in 1667, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, close to Chaucer and Spenser.

Cowley was a peculiarly precocious genius, his first book of poems being published when he was but fifteen years of age, while two comedies, as well as the greater part of his sacred epic, the Davideis, were written before he left college. His best poems, however, with the exception of a few short pieces, were the produce of later days, and are found in the Miscellanies, in the translations from Anacreon. in the Pindaric Odes, and in the collection of amatory verses called The Mistress. Apart from the actual value of his writings, Cowley is an interesting figure on account of his peculiar position in the history of English Literature. He stands between the age of Elizabeth and that of the Restoration, being the younger contemporary of Ben Jonson and Donne, while at the same time he belongs to the period represented by Waller and Dryden. But he has far more affinity with Donne than with his more immediate contemporaries, and is one of the most conspicuous figures in

the group of poets headed by Donne, poets whom Johnson dubbed metaphysical, but who may more aptly be described as later Euphuists.

Cowley valued himself as the author of the Davideis and the Pindaric Odes, and spoke almost apologetically of his occasional verse. But it is as an occasional poet that we value him, as the poet who loved country and solitude, yet could rattle forth the lightest of vers de societé.-catch the fine flavour of an Anacreontic drinking-song, or tell with sympathetic tenderness of the death of "poet and saint." The reader of Cowley must make up his mind to accept and allow for those peculiarities of metaphor and conceit which earned the name of Metaphysical Poets for Donne and his school. That Cowley was highly artificial cannot be denied, and with the exception of a few of his lightest poems, his verse has little of the freshness that marked the work of the Elizabethan and Jacobean lyrists. Yet he who is deterred by these considerations will miss much both of pleasure and profit, for if, as Johnson says, his "conceits were far-fetched, they were often worth the carriage." Such things are the fruit of fancy rather than imagination, but for proof that Cowley was not lacking in the latter, we have but to turn to such poems as the Elegy on Crashaw, the Ode on the Royal Society, or the Hymn to Light, the last of which, though here and there marred by conceits, is especially full of beauty, both of thought and word. Admirable single lines are found even in the dullest of Cowley's writings, and in this poem there is one which for pure beauty has hardly been surpassed by Shelley himself:

"The virgin lilies in their white
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light."

Cowley cannot be studied apart from his age. He himself

admitted that "The Mistress" was written because "poets are scarce thought freemen of their company, without paying some duties, and obliging themselves to be true to love," and as we should expect after this confession, his amatory verse does not bear the impress of real passion. The conventions of love poetry came to him from Wyatt and Surrey. They were a little threadbare from long use by the time they reached him, and it is probably to his consciousness of this that we partly owe the twisted conceits and astonishing metaphors over which Addison and Johnson made merry.

In the *Pindaric Odes* Cowley tried a form of verse which was new to English literature, and to which he was attracted by its apparent freedom.

The Ode, it has been said, should bear the same relation to lyrical as the epic to narrative poetry. Cowley, recognising this necessity for heroic treatment, aimed at the grand style, with the result that his Odes are invariably dignified, both in matter and form, and usually show intellect, imagination, and power. But the lyrical quality is too often wanting, and an occasional formlessness leads us to conclude that the apparent irregularity of Pindar caused Cowley to overlook the real structural and musical unity of the Greek Ode. But if, in the Pindaric Odes, Cowley did not master the style of his model as perfectly as he himself thought, this cannot be said of the Anacreontiques. Leigh Hunt has a delightful essay on Anacreon, in which he declares that he who says Anacreon cannot be translated has never read Cowley, nor realised that it is possible for two men in different ages to be inspired by the same spirit, and certainly, if delight in beauty and pleasure—the sentiment "How good is man's life, the mere living!"-form the keynote to Anacreon's work, Cowley is in fullest har-

mony with him. These little poems are like the momentary glimpses, — caught by some swiftly - passing traveller in Southern lands—of spots redolent of love, wine, roses and sunlight—glimpses in which the eye has no time to perceive anything but beauty. And that the vein in which they were written was really natural to Cowley may be inferred from the fact that, of his shorter poems, those are the most successful which show something of the same epicurean spirit.

In a short review of this nature, it is not possible to give any adequate account of Cowley's works, but one or two points must not be omitted from notice. He has written essays which are very perfect examples of the familiar style, and carry on many of the best traditions of Montaigne; — in the odes on the death of Hervey and Crashaw he has shown that as an elegiac poet he ranks only below the highest, and finally to him may be given this praise, that, in an age not famed for strictness, he hardly ever deviated, either in word or thought, from a lofty standard of pure morality.

The present selection professes to be representative of his lyrical poems only. Want of space has rendered it necessary to omit many of great merit, but the editor has endeavoured to include some of the most attractive of each class, as well as two or three which, though a little remote from present-day taste, are eminently characteristic of the school to which Cowley belonged.

K. B. L.



ESSAY OF MYSELF



T is a hard and nice subject for a man to write of himself; it grates his own heart to say any thing of disparagement, and the reader's ears to hear any thing of praise from him. There is no danger from me of offending him in this kind; neither my mind, nor my body, nor my fortune, allow me any materials for that vanity. It is

sufficient for my own contentment, that they have preserved me from being scandalous or remarkable on the defective side. But, besides that, I shall here speak of myself only in relation to the subject of these precedent discourses, and shall be likelier thereby to fall into the contempt, than rise up to the estimation, of most people.

As far as my memory can return back into my past life, before I knew, or was capable of guessing, what the world or the glories or business of it were, the natural affections of my soul gave me a secret bent of aversion from them, as some plants are said to turn away from others, by an antipathy imperceptible to themselves, and inscrutable to man's understanding. Even when I was a very young boy at school, instead of running about on holy-days and playing with my fellows, I was wont to steal from them, and walk into the fields, either alone with a book, or with some one companion, if I could find any of the same temper. I was then, too, so much an enemy to all constraint, that my masters could never prevail on me, by any persuasions or encouragements, to learn without book the common rules of grammar;

A

in which they dispensed with me alone, because they found I made a shift to do the usual exercise out of my own reading and observation. That I was then of the same mind as I am now (which I confess, I wonder at myself) may appear by the latter end of an ode, which I made when I was but thirteen years old, and which was then printed with many other verses. The beginning of it is boyish; but of this part, which I here set down (if a very little were corrected), I should hardly now be much ashamed.

This only grant me, that my means may lie

Too low for envy, for contempt too high.

Some honour I would have,

Not from great deeds, but good alone;

The unknown are better than ill known:

Rumour can ope the grave.

Acquaintance I would have, but when 't depends

Not on the number, but the choice, of friends.

Books should, not business, entertain the light,

And sleep, as undisturbed as death, the night.

My house a cottage more

Than palace; and should fitting be

For all my use, no luxury.

My garden painted o'er

With Nature's hand, not Art's; and pleasures yield,
Horace might envy in his Sabine field.

Thus would I double my life's fading space;
For he, that runs it well, twice runs his race.
And in this true delight,
These unbought sports, this happy state,
I would not fear, nor wish, my fate;
But boldly say each night,
To-morrow let my sun his beams display,
Or in clouds hide them; I have lived to-day.

You may see by it, I was even then acquainted with the poets (for the conclusion is taken out of Horace*); and
* 3 Od. xxix. 41.

ESSAY OF MYSELF

perhaps it was the immature and immoderate love of them which stamped first, or rather engraved, these characters in me; they were like letters cut into the bark of a young tree. which with the tree still grow proportionably. But, how this love came to be produced in me so early, is a hard question : I believe I can tell the particular little chance that filled my head first with such chimes of verse, as have never since left ringing there: for I remember, when I began to read. and to take some pleasure in it, there was wont to lie in my mother's parlour (I know not by what accident, for she herself never in her life read any book but of devotion)-but there was wont to lie Spenser's works; this I happened to fall upon, and was infinitely delighted with the stories of the knights, and giants, and monsters, and brave houses, which I found every-where there (though my understanding had little to do with all this); and, by degrees, with the tinkling of the rhyme and dance of the numbers; so that, I think, I had read him all over before I was twelve years old, and was thus made a poet as immediately as a child is made an eunuch.

With these affections of mind, and my heart wholly set upon letters, I went to the university; but was soon torn from thence by that violent public storm, which would suffer nothing to stand where it did, but rooted up every plant. even from the princely cedars to me the hyssop. Yet, I had as good fortune as could have befallen me in such a tempest; for I was cast by it into the family of one of the best persons, and into the court of one of the best princesses, of the world. Now, though I was here engaged in ways most contrary to the original design of my life, that is, into much company, and no small business, and into a daily sight of greatness, both militant and triumphant (for that was the state then of the English and French courts): vet all this was so far from altering my opinion, that it only added the confirmation of reason to that which was before but natural inclination. I saw plainly all the paint of that kind of life, the nearer I came to it; and that beauty, which I did not fall in love with, when, for aught I knew, it was

real, was not like to bewitch or entice me, when I saw that it was adulterate. I met with several great persons, whom I liked very well; but could not perceive that any part of their greatness was to be liked or desired, no more than I would be glad or content to be in a storm, though I saw many ships which rid safely and bravely in it: a storm would not agree with my stomach, if it did with my courage. Though I was in a crowd of as good company as could be found any-where; though I was in business of great and honourable trust; though I ate at the best table, and enjoyed the best conveniences for present subsistence that ought to be desired by a man of my condition in banishment and public distresses; yet I could not abstain from renewing my old school-boy's wish, in a copy of verses to the same effect:

Well then*; I now do plainly see This busy world and I shall ne'er agree, etc.

And I never then proposed to myself any other advantage from his majesty's happy restoration, but the getting into some moderately convenient retreat in the country; which I thought in that case I might easily have compassed, as well as some others, who, with no greater probabilities or pretences, have arrived to extraordinary fortunes: but I had before written a shrewd prophecy against myself, and I think Apollo inspired me in the truth, though not in the elegance of it:

"Thou neither great at court, nor in the war,
Nor at th' exchange, shalt be, nor at the wrangling bar.
Content thyself with the small barren praise,
Which neglected verse does raise."
She spake; and all my years to come
Took their unlucky doom.
Their several ways of life let others choose,
Their several pleasures let them use;
But I was born for Love, and for a Muse.

^{*} We have these verses, under the name of "The Wish," in this volume.

ESSAY OF MYSELF

With Fate what boots it to contend?

Such I began, such am, and so must end.

The star, that did my being frame,

Was but a lambent flame,

And some small light it did dispense,

But neither heat nor influence.

No matter, Cowley; let proud Fortune see,

That thou canst her despise, no less than she does thee.

Let all her gifts the portion be
Of folly, lust, and flattery,
Fraud, extortion, calumny,
Murder, infidelity,
Rebellion, and hypocrisy.
Do thou not grieve nor blush to be,
As all th' inspired tuneful men,
And all thy great forefathers, were, from Homer down to
Ben.

However, by the failing of the forces which I had expected, I did not quit the design which I had resolved on; I cast myself into it a corps perdu, without making capitulations, or taking counsel of fortune. But God laughs at a man, who says to his soul, "Take thy ease": I met presently not only with many little incumbrances and impediments, but with so much sickness (a new misfortune to me) as would have spoiled the happiness of an emperor as well as mine: yet I do neither repent, nor alter my course. "Non ego perfidum dixi sacramentum": nothing shall separate me from a mistress which I have loved so long, and have now at last married; though she neither has brought me a rich portion, nor lived yet so quietly with me as I hoped from her:

—"Nec vos, dulcissima mundi Nomina, vos Musæ, Libertas, Otia, Libri, Hortique Sylvæque, anima remanente, relinquam."

Nor by me e'er shall you, You, of all names the sweetest and the best, You, Muses, books, and liberty, and rest; You, gardens, fields, and woods, forsaken be, As long as life itself forsakes not me.

THE MOTTO

POEMS

THE MOTTO

"Tentanda via est, etc."

What shall I do to be for ever known, And make the age to come my own? I shall, like beasts or common people, die, Unless you write my elegy; Whilst others great, by being born, are grown; Their mothers' labour, not their own. In this scale gold, in th' other fame does lie. The weight of that mounts this so high. These men are Fortune's jewels, moulded bright: Brought forth with their own fire and light: If I, her vulgar stone, for either look, Out of myself it must be strook. Yet I must on; What sound is't strikes mine ear? Sure I Fame's trumpet hear: It sounds like the last trumpet; for it can Raise up the buried man. Unpast Alps stop me; but I'll cut them all, And March, the Muses' Hannibal. Hence, all the flattering vanities that lay Nets of roses in the way! Hence, the desire of honours or estate, And all that is not above Fate! Hence, Love himself, that tyrant of my days! Which intercepts my coming praise.

'Tis time that I were gone.

Come, my best friends, my books! and lead me on;

Welcome, great Stagyrite! and teach me now All I was born to know:

Thy scholar's victories thou dost far out-do;
He conquered th' earth, the whole world you.

Welcome, learned Cicero! whose blest tongue and wit Preserves Rome's greatness vet:

Thou art the first of Orators; only he

Who best can praise thee, next must be.

Welcome the Mantuan swan, Virgil the wise! Whose verse walks highest, but not flies;

Who brought green Poesy to her perfect age, And made that Art which was a Rage.

Tell me, ye mighty Three! what shall I do
To be like one of you?

But you have climbed the mountain's top, there sit On the calm flourishing head of it,

And, whilst with wearied steps we upward go, See us, and clouds, below.

ODE

OF WIT

Tell me, O tell, what kind of thing is Wit,
Thou who master art of it?
For the first matter loves variety less;
Less women love 't, either in love or dress.
A thousand different shapes it bears,
Comely in thousand shapes appears.
Yonder we saw it plain; and here 'tis now,
Like spirits in a place, we know not how.

London, that vents of false ware so much store,
In no ware deceives us more;
For men, led by the colour and the shape,
Like Zeuxis' birds, fly to the painted grape.
Some things do through our judgment pass
As through a multiplying glass;
And sometimes, if the object be too far,
We take a falling meteor for a star.

Hence 'tis a Wit, that greatest word of fame, Grows such a common name; And Wits by our creation they become, Just so as titular bishops made at Rome.

'Tis not a tale, 'tis not a jest
Admired with laughter at a feast,
Nor florid talk, which can that title gain;
The proofs of Wit for ever must remain.

'Tis not to force some lifeless verses meet
With their five gouty feet.
All, every-where, like man's, must be the soul,
And Reason the inferior powers control.

Such were the numbers which could call The stones into the Theban wall. Such miracles are ceased; and now we see No towns or houses raised by poetry.

Yet 'tis not to adorn and gild each part;

That shows more cost than art.

Jewels at nose and lips but ill appear;

Rather than all things Wit, let none be there,

Several lights will not be seen,

If there be nothing else between. Men doubt, because they stand so thick i' th' sky, If those be stars which paint the Galaxy.

'Tis not when two like words make up one noise
(Jests for Dutch men and English boys);
In which who finds out Wit, the same may see
In an'grams and acrostic's poetry:

Much less can that have any place At which a virgin hides her face; Such dross the fire must purge away: 'tis just The author blush there, where the reader must.

'Tis not such lines as almost crack the stage
When Bajazet begins to rage;
Nor a tall metaphor in the bombast way;
Nor the dry chips of short-lung'd Seneca;

Nor upon all things to obtrude
And force some odd similitude.

What is it then, which, like the Power Divine,
We only can by negatives define?

In a true piece of Wit all things must be, Yet all things there agree; As in the ark, joined without force or strife, All creatures dwelt; all creatures that had life:

Or, as the primitive forms of all (If we compare great things with small Which, without discord or confusion, lie In that strange mirror of the Deity.

OF WIT

But Love, that moulds one man up out of two,
Makes me forget, and injure you:
I took you for myself, sure, when I thought
That you in anything were to be taught.
Correct my error with thy pen;
And, if any ask me then
What thing right With and height of Continued.

What thing right Wit and height of Genius is, I'll only show your lines, and say, 'Tis this.

THE CHRONICLE

A BALLAD

Margarita first possest,

If I remember well, my breast,
Margarita first of all;
But when awhile the wanton maid
With my restless heart had played,
Martha took the flying ball.

Martha soon did it resign

To the beauteous Catharine.

Beauteous Catharine gave place
(Though loth and angry she to part
With the possession of my heart)

To Eliza's conquering face.

Eliza till this hour might reign,

Had she not evil counsels ta'en.

Fundamental laws she broke,
And still new favourites she chose,
Till up in arms my passions rose,
And cast away her yoke.

Mary then, and gentle Anne,

Both to reign at once began;

Alternately they swayed;

And sometimes Mary was the fair,

And sometimes Anne the crown did wear,

And sometimes both I obeyed.

THE CHRONICLE

Another Mary then arose,
And did rigorous laws impose;
A mighty tyrant she!
Long, alas! should I have been
Under that iron-sceptered queen,
Had not Rebecca set me free.

When fair Rebecca set me free,

'Twas then a golden time with me:
But soon those pleasures fled;
For the gracious princess died,
In her youth and beauty's pride,
And Judith reignèd in her stead.

One month, three days, and half an hour,
Judith held the sovereign power:
Wondrous beautiful her face!
But so weak and small her wit,
That she to govern was unfit,
And so Susanna took her place.

But when Isabella came,
Armed with a resistless flame,
And th' artillery of her eye;
Whilst she proudly marched about,
Greater conquests to find out,
She beat out Susan by the bye.

But in her place I then obeyed

Black-eyed Bess, her Viceroy-maid;

To whom ensued a vacancy:

Thousand worst passions then possest

The interregnum of my breast;

Bless me from such an anarchy!

Gentle Henrietta then,
And a third Mary, next began;
Then Joan, and Jane, and Audria;
And then a pretty Thomasine,
And then another Katharine,
And then a long et caetera.

But should I now to you relate,

The strength and riches of their state,
The powder, patches, and the pins,
The ribbons, jewels, and the rings,
The lace, the paint, and warlike things,
That make up all their magazines;

If I should tell the politic arts

To take and keep men's hearts;

The letters, embassies, and spies,

The frowns, and smiles, and flatteries,

The quarrels, tears, and perjuries

Numberless, nameless, mysteries!

And all the little lime-twigs laid,

By Machiavel the waiting-maid;
I more voluminous should grow
(Chiefly if I like them should tell

All change of weathers that befell)
Than Holinshed or Stow.

But I will briefer with them be,
Since few of them were long with me.
An higher and a nobler strain
My present Empress does claim,
Heleonora, first o' th' name;
Whom God grant long to reign!

FRIENDSHIP IN ABSENCE

FRIENDSHIP IN ABSENCE

When chance or cruel business part us two,
What do our souls, I wonder, do?
Whilst sleep does our dull bodies tie,
Methinks at home they should not stay,
Content with dreams, but boldly fly
Abroad, and meet each other half the way.

Sure they do meet, enjoy each other there,
And mix, I know not how nor where!
Their friendly lights together twine,
Though we perceive 't not to be so!
Like loving stars, which oft combine,
Yet not themselves their own conjunctions know.

'Twere an ill world, I'll swear, for every friend,
If distance could their union end:
But Love itself does far advance
Above the power of time and space;
It scorns such outward circumstance,
His time's for ever, every-where his place.

I'm there with thee, yet here with me thou art,
Lodged in each other's heart:
Miracles cease not yet in love.
When he his mighty power will try,
Absence itself does bounteous prove,
And strangely ev'n our presence multiply.

Pure is the flame of Friendship, and divine,

Like that which in Heaven's sun does shine:

He in the upper air and sky

Does no effects of heat bestow;

But, as his beams the farther fly,

He begets warmth, life, beauty, here below.

Friendship is less apparent when too nigh,

Like objects if they touch the eye.

Less meritorious then is love;

For when we friends together see

So much, so much both one do prove,

That their love then seems but self-love to be.

Each day think on me, and each day I shall
For thee make hours canonical.
By every wind that comes this way,
Send me, at least, a sigh or two;
Such and so many I'll repay,
As shall themselves make winds to get to you.

A thousand pretty ways we'll think upon,
To mock our separation.
Alas! ten thousand will not do:
My heart will thus no longer stay;
No longer 'twill be kept from you,
But knocks against the breast to get away.

And, when no art affords me help or ease,

I seek with verse my griefs t' appease;

Just as a bird, that flies about

And beats itself against the cage,

Finding at last no passage out,

It sits and sings, and so o'ercomes its rage.

ON THE DEATH OF MR WILLIAM HERVEY

"Immodicis brevis est ætas, et rara senectus."-Mart.

It was a dismal and a fearful night,
Scarce could the morn drive on th' unwilling light,
When sleep, death's image, left my troubled breast,
By something liker death possest.
My eyes with tears did uncommanded flow,
And on my soul hung the dull weight
Of some intolerable fate.
What bell was that? Ah me! Too much I know.

My sweet companion, and my gentle peer,
Why hast thou left me thus unkindly here,
Thy end for ever, and my life, to moan?
O, thou hast left me all alone!
Thy soul and body, when Death's agony
Besieged around thy noble heart,
Did not with more reluctance part,
Than I, my dearest friend! do part from thee.

My dearest friend, would I had died for thee!
Life and this world henceforth will tedious be.
Nor shall I know hereafter what to do,
If once my griefs prove tedious too.
Silent and sad I walk about all day,
As sullen ghosts stalk speechless by
Where their hid treasures lie;
Alas! my treasures gone! why do I stay?

B

He was my friend, the truest friend on earth;
A strong and mighty influence join'd our birth;
Nor did we envy the most sounding name
By friendship given of old to fame.
None but his brethren he and sisters knew,
Whom the kind youth preferred to me;
And ev'n in that we did agree,
For much above myself I loved them too.

Say, for you saw us, ye immortal lights,
How oft unwearied have we spent the nights,
Till the Ledæan stars, so famed for love,
Wondered at us from above!
We spent them not in toys, in lusts, or wine;
But search of deep Philosophy,
Wit, Eloquence, and Poetry.
Arts which I loved, for they, my friend, were thine.

Ye fields of Cambridge, our dear Cambridge, say Have ye not seen us walking every day? Was there a tree about which did not know The love betwixt us two?

Henceforth, ye gentle trees, for ever fade;
Or your sad branches thicker join,
And into darksome shades combine,
Dark as the grave wherein my friend is laid!

Henceforth, no learned youths beneath you sing,
Till all the tuneful birds to your boughs they bring:
No tuneful birds play with their wonted cheer,
And call the learned youths to hear;
No whistling winds through the glad branches fly:
But all, with sad solemnity,
Mute and unmoved be,

Mute as the grave wherein my friend does lie.

To him my Muse made haste with every strain, Whilst it was new and warm yet from the brain: He loved my worthless rimes, and, like a friend, Would find out something to commend.

ON MR WILLIAM HERVEY

Hence now, my Muse! thou canst not me delight:
Be this my latest verse,
With which I now adorn his hearse;
And this my grief, without thy help, shall write.

Had I a wreath of bays about my brow, I should contemn that flourishing honour now; Condemn it to the fire, and joy to hear

It rage and cackle there.

Instead of bays, crown with sad cypress me;
Cypress, which tombs does beautify:
Not Phœbus grieved, so much as I,
For him who first was made that mournful tree.

Large was his soul; as large a soul as e'er
Submitted to inform a body here;
High as the place 'twas shortly in Heaven to have,
But low and humble as his grave:
So high, that all the Virtues there did come,
As to their chiefest seat
Conspicuous and great;
So low, that for me too it made a room.

He scorned this busy world below, and all That we, mistaken mortals! pleasure call; Was filled with innocent gallantry and truth, Triumphant o'er the sins of youth.

He, like the stars, to which he now is gone,
That shine with beams like flame,
Yet burn not with the same,
Had all the light of youth, of the fire none.

Knowledge he only sought, and so soon caught,
As if for him Knowledge had rather sought:
Nor did more Learning ever crowded lie
In such a short mortality.
Whene'er the skilful youth discoursed or writ,
Still did the notions throng

About his eloquent tongue, Nor could his ink flow faster than his wit.

So strong a wit did Nature to him frame,
As all things but his judgment overcame;
His judgment like the heavenly moon did show,
Tempering that mighty sea below.

Oh! had he lived in Learning's world, what bound Would have been able to control
His over-powering soul!

We have lost in him arts that not yet are found.

His mirth was the pure spirits of various wit,
Yet never did his God or friends forget;
And, when deep talk and wisdom came in view,
Retired, and gave to them their due:
For the rich help of books he always took,
Though his own searching mind before
Was so with notions written o'er
As if wise Nature had made that her book.

So many virtues joined in him, as we
Can scarce pick here and there in history;
More than old writers' practice e'er could reach;
As much as they could ever teach.
These did Religion, Queen of virtues! sway;
And all their sacred motions steer,
Just like the first and highest sphere,
Which wheels about, and turns all heaven one way.

With as much zeal, devotion, piety,
He always lived, as other saints do die.
Still with his soul severe account he kept,
Weeping all debts out ere he slept:
Then down in peace and innocence he lay,
Like the sun's laborious light,
Which still in water sets at night,
Unsullied with his journey of the day.

Wondrous young man! why wert thou made so good, To be snatched hence ere better understood? Snatched before half of thee enough was seen!

Thou ripe, and yet thy life but green!

ON MR WILLIAM HERVEY

Nor could thy friends take their last sad farewell;
But danger and infectious death
Maliciously seized on that breath
Where life, spirit, pleasure, always used to dwell.

But happy thou, ta'en from this frantic age,
Where ignorance and hypocrisy does rage!
A fitter time for Heaven no soul ere chose,
The place now only free from those.
There 'mong the blest thou dost for ever shine,
And, wheresoe'er thou cast'st thy view,
Upon that white and radiant crew,
Seest not a soul clothed with more light than thine.

And, if the glorious saints cease not to know
Their wretched friends who fight with life below,
Thy flame to me does still the same abide,
Only more pure and rarefied.
There, whilst immortal hymns thou dost rehearse,
Thou dost with holy pity see
Our dull and earthly poesy,
Where grief and misery can be joined with verse.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

THAT THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE

Against the Dogmatists

The sacred tree 'midst the fair orchard grew;
The Phœnix truth did on it rest,
And built his perfumed nest;
That right Porphyrian tree which did true Logic shew.
Each leaf did learned notions give,
And th' apples were demonstrative;

So clear their colour and divine,
The very shade they cast did other lights out-shine.

"Taste not," said God; "'tis mine and angels' meat;
A certain death doth sit,
Like an ill worm, i' th' core of it.

Ye cannot know and live, nor live or know and eat."

Thus spoke God, yet man did go
Ignorantly on to know;
Grew so more blind, and she

Who tempted him to this, grew yet more blind than he.

The only science man by this did get,

Was but to know he nothing knew:

He-straight his nakedness did view,

His ignorant poor estate, and was ashamed of it,

Yet searches probabilities,

And rhetoric, and fallacies,

And seeks by useless pride,

With slight and withering leaves that nakedness to hide.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE

"Henceforth," said God, "the wretched sons of earth
Shall sweat for food in vain,
That will not long sustain;
And bring with labour forth each fond abortive birth.
That serpent too, their pride,
Which aims at things denied;
That learned and eloquent lust;
Instead of mounting high, shall creep upon the dust."

ON THE

DEATH OF MR CRASHAW

Poet and Saint! to thee alone are given

The two most sacred names of Earth and Heaven: The hard and rarest union which can be, Next that of Godhead with humanity. Long did the Muses' banished slaves abide, And built vain pyramids to mortal pride; Like Moses thou (though spells and charms withstand) Hast brought them nobly home back to their holy land. Ah wretched we, poets of earth! but thou Wert living the same poet which thou'rt now: Whilst angels sing to thee their airs divine, And joy in an applause so great as thine. Equal society with them to hold, Thou need'st not make new songs, but say the old; And they (kind spirits!) shall all rejoice, to see How little less than they, exalted man may be. Still the old Heathen gods in numbers dwell: The heavenliest thing on earth still keeps up hell! Nor have we yet quite purged the Christian land; Still idols here, like calves at Bethel, stand. And, though Pan's death long since all oracles broke. Yet still in rhyme the fiend Apollo spoke: Nay, with the worst of heathen dotage, we (Vain men!) the monster Woman deify: Find stars, and tie our fates there in a face, And paradise in them, by whom we lost it, place. What different faults corrupt our Muses thus? Wanton as girls, as old wives fabulous!

ON MR CRASHAW

Thy spotless Muse, like Mary, did contain
The boundless Godhead; she did well disdain
That her eternal verse employed should be
On a less subject than Eternity;
And for a sacred mistress scorned to take,
But her whom God himself scorned not his spouse to make.
It (in a kind) her miracle did do;
A fruitful mother was, and virgin too.

* How well (blest swan!) did Fate contrive thy death, And made thee render up thy tuneful breath In thy great mistress' arms, thou most divine And richest offering of Loretto's shrine! Where, like some holy sacrifice t' expire, A fever burns thee, and Love lights the fire. Angels (they say) brought the famed chapel there, And bore the sacred load in triumph through the air: 'Tis surer much they brought thee there; and they, And thou, their charge, went singing all the way.

Pardon, my mother-church! if I consent That angels led him when from thee he went; For ev'n in error sure no danger is, When joined with so much piety as his. Ah, mighty God! with shame I speak 't, and grief, Ah, that our greatest faults were in belief! And our weak reason were ev'n weaker vet. Rather than thus our wills too strong for it! His faith, perhaps, in some nice tenets might Be wrong; his life, I'm sure, was in the right; And I myself a Catholic will be, So far at least, great Saint! to pray to thee. Hail, bard triumphant! and some care bestow On us, the poets militant below! Opposed by our old enemy, adverse Chance, Attacked by Envy and by Ignorance; Enchained by Beauty, tortured by Desires, Exposed by Tyrant-Love to savage beasts and fires.

^{*} Mr Crashaw died of a fever at Loretto, being newly chosen canon of that church.

Thou from low earth in nobler flames didst rise,
And, like Elijah, mount alive the skies.
Elisha-like (but with a wish much less,
More fit thy greatness and my littleness)
Lo! here I beg (I, whom thou once didst prove
So humble to esteem, so good to love)
Not that thy spirit might on me doubled be,
I ask but half thy mighty spirit for me:
And, when my Muse soars with so strong a wing,
'Twill learn of things divine, and first of thee, to sing.

ANACREONTIQUES

or

SOME COPIES OF VERSES

Translated paraphrastically out of Anacreon

I

LOVE

I'll sing of heroes and of kings, In mighty numbers, mighty things. Begin, my Muse! but lo! the strings To my great song rebellious prove: The strings will sound of nought but Love. I broke them all, and put on new: 'Tis this or nothing sure will do. These sure (said I) will me obey; These, sure, heroic notes will play. Straight I began with thundering Jove, And all th' immortal powers; but Love, Love smiled and from my enfeebled lyre Came gentle airs, such as inspire Melting love and soft desire. Farewell then, heroes! farewell, kings! And mighty numbers, mighty things! Love tunes my heart just to my strings.

II

DRINKING

The thirsty earth soaks up the rain. And drinks, and gapes for drink again. The plants suck in the earth, and are With constant drinking fresh and fair; The sea itself (which one would think Should have but little need of drink) Drinks twice ten thousand rivers up. So fill'd that they o'erflow the cup. The busy sun (and one would guess By's drunken fiery face no less) Drinks up the sea, and, when he has done, The moon and stars drink up the sun: They drink and dance by their own light: They drink and revel all the night. Nothing in nature's sober found. But an eternal health goes round. Fill up the bowl then, fill it high, Fill all the glasses there; for why Should every creature drink but I; Why, man of morals, tell me why?

III

BEAUTY

Liberal Nature did dispense To all things arms for their defence: And some she arms with sinewy force. And some with swiftness in the course: Some with hard hoofs or forked claws. And some with horns or tusked jaws: And some with scales, and some with wings, And some with teeth, and some with stings. Wisdom to man she did afford. Wisdom for shield, and wit for sword. What to beauteous womankind, What arms, what armour, has she assigned? Beauty is both; for with the fair What arms, what armour, can compare? What steel, what gold, or diamond, More impassible is found? And yet what flame, what lightning, e'er So great an active force did bear? They are all weapon, and they dart Like porcupines from every part. Who can, alas! their strength express, Armed, when they themselves undress, Cap-a-pie with nakedness?

IV

THE DUEL

Yes. I will love then. I will love: I will not now Love's rebel prove, Though I was once his enemy: Though ill-advised and stubborn I. Did to the combat him defv. An helmet, spear, and mighty shield, Like some new Aiax, I did wield. Love in one hand his bow did take. In th' other hand a dart did shake; But yet in vain the dart did throw, In vain he often drew the bow: So well my armour did resist. So oft by flight the blow I mist: But, when I thought all danger past. His quiver emptied quite at last, Instead of arrow or of dart He shot himself into my heart. The living and the killing arrow Ran through the skin, the flesh, the blood, And broke the bones, and scorched the marrow. No trench or work of life withstood. In vain I now the walls maintain: I set out guards and scouts in vain: Since th' enemy does within remain. In vain a breast-plate now I wear, Since in my breast the foe I bear; In vain my feet their swiftness try: For from the body can they fly?

v AGE

Oft am I by the women told,
Poor Anacreon! thou grow'st old:
Look how thy hairs are falling all;
Poor Anacreon, how they fall!
Whether I grow old or no,
By th' effects I do not know;
This I know, without being told,
'Tis time to live, if I grow old;
'Tis time short pleasures now to take,
Of little life the best to make,
And manage wisely the last stake.

VI THE ACCOUNT

When all the stars are by thee told (The endless sums of heavenly gold); Or when the hairs are reckoned all. From sickly autumn's head that fall: Or when the drops that make the sea, Whilst all her sands thy counters be: Thou then, and thou alone, may'st prove Th' arithmetician of my love. An hundred loves at Athens score. At Corinth write an hundred more: Fair Corinth does such beauties bear. So few is an escaping there. Write then at Chios seventy-three; Write then at Lesbos (let me see) Write me at Lesbos ninety down. Full ninety loves, and half a one. And, next to these, let me present The fair Ionian regiment: And next the Carian company: Five hundred both effectively. Three hundred more at Rhodes and Crete; Three hundred 'tis, I'm sure, complete: For arms at Crete each face does bear. And every eye's an archer there. Go on: this stop why dost thou make? Thou think'st, perhaps, that I mistake. Seems this to thee too great a sum? Why many thousands are to come:

THE ACCOUNT

The mighty Xerxes could not boast Such different nations in his host. On; for my love, if thou be'st weary, Must find some better secretary. I have not yet my Persian told, Nor yet my Syrian loves enrolled, Nor Indian, nor Arabian; Nor Cyprian loves, nor African; Nor Scythian nor Italian flames; There's a whole map behind of names Of gentle loves i' th' temperate zone, And cold ones in the frigid one, Cold frozen loves, with which I pine, And parchèd loves beneath the Line.

C

VII GOLD

A mighty pain to love it is, And 'tis a pain that pain to miss; But of all pains, the greatest pain It is to love, but love in vain. Virtue now, nor noble blood, Nor wit, by Love is understood; Gold alone does passion move, Gold monopolises love; A curse on her, and on the man Who this traffick first began! A curse on him who found the ore! A curse on him who digged the store! A curse on him who did refine it! A curse on him who first did coin it! A curse, all curses else above, On him who used it first in love! Gold begets in brethren hate; Gold in families debate; Gold does friendships separate; Gold does civil wars create. These the smallest harms of it! Gold, alas! does love beget.

THE EPICURE

VIII THE EPICURE

Fill the bowl with rosy wine!
Around our temples roses twine!
And let us cheerfully awhile,
Like the wine and roses, smile.
Crowned with roses, we contemn
Gyges' wealthy diadem.
To-day is ours; what do we fear?
To-day is ours; we have it here:
Let's treat it kindly, that it may
Wish, at least, with us to stay.
Let's banish business, banish sorrow;
To the Gods belongs to-morrow.

IX

ANOTHER

Underneath this myrtle shade. On flowery beds supinely laid, With odorous oils my head o'er-flowing, And around it roses growing, What should I do but drink away The heat and troubles of the day? In this more than kingly state Love himself shall on me wait. Fill to me, Love, nay fill it up; And mingled cast into the cup Wit, and mirth, and noble fires, Vigorous health and gay desires. The wheel of life no less will stay In a smooth than rugged way: Since it equally doth flee, Let the motion pleasant be. Why do we precious ointments shower? Nobler wines why do we pour? Beauteous flowers why do we spread, Upon the monuments of the dead? Nothing they but dust can show, Or bones that hasten to be so. Crown me with roses whilst I live, Now your wines and ointments give; After death I nothing crave, Let me alive my pleasures have, All are Stoick in the grave.

THE GRASSHOPPER

X

THE GRASSHOPPER

Happy insect! what can be In happiness compared to thee? Fed with nourishment divine, The dewy morning's gentle wine! Nature waits upon thee still, And thy verdant cup does fill; 'Tis filled wherever thou dost tread, Nature's self's thy Ganymede. Thou dost drink, and dance, and sing; Happier than the happiest king! All the fields which thou dost see, All the plants, belong to thee: All that summer-hours produce, Fertile made with early juice. Man for thee does sow and plough; Farmer he, and landlord thou! Thou dost innocently joy; Nor does thy luxury destroy: The shepherd gladly heareth thee, More harmonious than he. Thee country hinds with gladness hear, Prophet of the ripened year! Thee Phœbus loves, and does inspire; Phœbus is himself thy sire. To thee, of all things upon earth, Life is no longer than thy mirth. Happy insect, happy thou! Dost neither age nor winter know: But, when thou'st drunk, and danced, and sung Thy fill, the flowery leaves among (Voluptuous, and wise withal, Epicurean animal!) Sated with thy summer feast, Thou retir'st to endless rest.

ΧI

THE SWALLOW

Foolish prater, what dost thou So early at my window do, With thy tuneless serenade? Well 't had been had Tereus made Thee as dumb as Philomel: There his knife had done but well. In thy undiscovered nest Thou dost all the winter rest, And dreamest o'er thy summer joys, Free from the stormy seasons' noise: Free from th' ill thou'st done to me: Who disturbs or seeks out thee? Hadst thou all the charming notes Of the wood's poetic throats, All thy art could never pay What thou'st ta'en from me away. Cruel bird! thou'st ta'en away A dream out of my arms to-day; A dream, that ne'er must equalled be By all that waking eyes may see. Thou, this damage to repair, Nothing half so sweet or fair, Nothing half so good, canst bring, Though men say thou bring'st the spring.

ODE

SITTING AND DRINKING IN THE CHAIR MADE OUT OF THE RELICS OF SIR FRANCIS DRAKE'S SHIP

Cheer up, my mates, the wind does fairly blow. Clap on more sail, and never spare: Farewell all lands, for now we are In the wide sea of drink, and merrily we go. Bless me, 'tis hot! another bowl of wine, And we shall cut the burning Line: Hey, boys! she scuds away, and by my head I know We round the world are sailing now. What dull men are those that tarry at home, When abroad they might wantonly roam, And gain such experience, and spy too Such countries and wonders, as I do! But pr'ythee, good pilot, take heed what you do. And fail not to touch at Peru! With gold there the vessel we'll store, And never, and never be poor, No, never be poor any more.

What do I mean? What thoughts do me misguide? As well upon a staff may witches ride
Their fancied journeys in the air,
As I sail round the ocean in this chair!
'Tis true; but yet this chair which here you see,
For all 'tis quiet now, and gravity,

Has wandered and has travelled more
Than ever beast, or fish, or bird, or ever tree, before:
In every air and every sea 't has been,
'T has compassed all the earth, and all the heavens't has
seen.

Let not the Pope's itself with this compare, This is the only universal chair.

The pious wanderer's fleet, saved from the flame
(Which still the relics did of Troy pursue,
And took them for its due),
A squadron of immortal nymphs became:

Still with their arms they row about the seas

A squaron of immortal hymphs became:

Still with their arms they row about the seas,
And still make new and greater voyages:

Nor has the first poetic ship of Greece
(Though now a star she so triumphant show,
And guide her sailing successors below,
Bright as her ancient freight the shining fleece)
Yet to this day a quiet harbour found;
The tide of heaven still carries her around.
Only Drake's sacred vessel which before

Had done and had seen more
Than those have done or seen,
Ev'n since they Goddesses and this a Star has been,
As a reward for all her labour past.

Is made the seat of rest at last.

Let the case now quite altered be,

And, as thou went'st abroad the world to see,

Let the world now come to see thee!

The world will do 't; for curiosity

Does, no less than devotion, pilgrims make;

And I myself, who now love quiet too,

As much almost as any chair can do,

Would yet a journey take,

An old wheel of that chariot to see,

Which Phaeton so rashly brake:

Yet what could that say more than these remains of Drake?

ODE

Great relic! thou too, in this port of ease,
Hast still one way of making voyages;
The breath of Fame, like an auspicious gale
(The great trade-wind which ne'er does fail)
Shall drive thee round the world, and thou shalt run
As long around it as the sun.
The straits of Time too narrow are for thee;
Launch forth into an undiscover'd sea,
And steer the endless course of vast Eternity!
Take for thy sail this verse, and for thy pilot me!

THE WISH

Well then; I now do plainly see
This busy world and I shall ne'er agree;
The very honey of all earthly joy
Does of all meats the soonest cloy;
And they, methinks, deserve my pity,
Who for it can endure the stings,
The crowd, and buz, and murmurings,
Of this great hive, the city.

Ah, yet, ere I descend to th' grave,
May I a small house and large garden have!
And a few friends, and many books, both true,
Both wise, and both delightful too!
And, since love ne'er will from me flee,
A mistress moderately fair,
And good as guardian-angels are,
Only beloved, and loving me!

Oh fountains! when in you shall I
Myself, eased of unpeaceful thoughts, espy?
Oh fields! oh woods! when, when shall I be made
The happy tenant of your shade?
Here's the spring-head of pleasure's flood;
Where all the riches lie, that she
Has coined and stamped for good.

Pride and ambition here,
Only in far-fetched metaphors appear;
Here nought but winds can hurtful murmurs scatter,
And nought but echo flatter.

THE WISH

The Gods, when they descended, hither From heaven did always choose their way: And therefore we may boldly say,

That 'tis the way too thither.

How happy here should I. And one dear She, live, and embracing die! She, who is all the world, and can exclude In deserts solitude.

I should have then this only fear-Lest men, when they my pleasures see, Should hither throng to live like me, And so make a city here.

FROM THE ESSAY OF SOLITUDE

Hail, old patrician trees, so great and good l
Hail, ye plebeian underwood l
Where the poetic birds rejoice,
And for their quiet nests, and plenteous food
Pay, with their grateful voice.

Hail, the poor Muses' richest manor-seat;
Ye country-houses and retreat,
Which all the happy gods so love,
That for you oft they quit their bright and great
Metropolis above.

Here Nature does a house for me erect,
Nature, the wisest architect,
Who those fond artists does despise
That can the fair and living trees neglect;
Yet the dead timber prize.

Here let me, careless and unthoughtful lying, Hear the soft winds, above me flying, With all their wanton boughs dispute, And the more tuneful birds to both replying, Nor be myself too mute.

A silver stream shall roll his waters near, Gilt with the sun-beams here and there; On whose enamelled bank I'll walk, And see how prettily they smile, and hear How prettily they talk.

OF SOLITUDE

Ah wretched and too solitary he,
Who loves not his own company!
He'll feel the weight of 't many a day,
Unless he call in sin or vanity
To help to bear 't away.

Oh, Solitude, first state of human kind!
Which blest remained, till man did find
Ev'n his own helper's company.
As soon as two plact together joined

As soon as two, alas! together joined, The serpent made up three.

Though God himself, through countless ages, thee
His sole companion chose to be,
Thee, sacred Solitude, alone,
Before the branchy head of number's tree
Sprang from the trunk of one.

Thou (though men think thine an unactive part)

Dost break and tame th' unruly heart,

Which else would know no settled pace,

Making it more well managed by the art

Making it move, well-managed by thy art, With swiftness and with grace.

Thou the faint beams of reason's scattered light Dost, like a burning-glass, unite;
Dost multiply the feeble heat,
And fortify the strength, till thou dost bright
And noble fires beget.

Whilst this hard truth I teach, methinks, I see
The monster London laugh at me;
I should at thee too, foolish city!

If it were fit to laugh at misery;
But thy estate I pity.

Let but thy wicked men from out thee go,
And all the fools that crowd thee so,
Even thou, who dost thy millions boast,
A village less than Islington wilt grow,
A solitude almost.

HYMN TO LIGHT

First-born of Chaos, who so fair didst come From the old negro's darksome womb! Which, when it saw the lovely child, The melancholy mass put on kind looks and smiled;

Thou tide of glory, which no rest dost know,

But ever ebb and ever flow!

Thou golden shower of a true Jove!

Who does in thee descend, and heaven to earth make love!

Hail, active Nature's watchful life and health!

Her joy, her ornament, and wealth!

Hail to thy husband Heat, and thee!

Thou the world's beauteous bride, the lusty bridegroom he!

Say from what golden quivers of the sky
Do all thy winged arrows fly?
Swiftness and power by birth are thine:
From thy great sire they came, thy sire the Word Divine.

'Tis, I believe, this archery to show,

That so much cost in colours thou,

And skill in painting, dost bestow,

Upon thy ancient arms, the gaudy heavenly bow.

Swift as light thoughts their empty career run,
Thy race is finished when begun;
Let a post-angel start with thee,
And thou the goal of earth shalt reach as soon as he.

HYMN TO LIGHT

Thou in the moon's bright chariot, proud and gav. Dost thy bright wood of stars survey: And all the year dost with thee bring Of thousand flowery lights thine own nocturnal spring.

Thou, Scythian-like, dost round thy lands above The sun's gilt tent for ever move. And still, as thou in pomp dost go, The shining pageants of the world attend thy show.

Nor amidst all these triumphs dost thou scorn The humble glow-worms to adorn. And with those living spangles gild (O greatness without pride!) the bushes of the field.

Night, and her ugly subjects, thou dost fright, And Sleep, the lazy owl of night; Ashamed, and fearful to appear, They screen their horrid shapes with the black hemisphere.

With them there hastes, and wildly takes the alarm, Of painted dreams a busy swarm: At the first opening of thine eye The various clusters break, the antic atoms fly.

The guilty serpents, and obscener beasts, Creep, conscious, to their secret rests: Nature to thee does reverence pay, Ill omens and ill sights remove out of thy way.

At thy appearance, Grief itself is said To shake his wings, and rouse his head: And cloudy Care has often took

A gentle beamy smile, reflected from thy look.

At thy appearance, Fear itself grows bold; Thy sunshine melts away his cold. Encouraged at the sight of thee, To the cheek colour comes, and firmness to the knee.

Ev'n Lust, the master of a hardened face, Blushes, if thou be'st in the place, To Darkness' curtains he retires; In sympathizing night he rolls his smoky fires.

When, Goddess! thou lift'st up thy wakened head, Out of the morning's purple bed, Thy quire of birds about thee play, And all the joyful world salutes the rising day.

The ghosts, and monster-spirits, that did presume A body's privilege to assume,
Vanish again invisibly,
And bodies gain again their visibility.

All the world's bravery, that delights our eyes,
Is but thy several liveries;
Thou the rich dye on them bestow'st,
Thy nimble pencil paints this landscape as thou go'st.

A crimson garment in the rose thou wear'st;
A crown of studded gold thou bear'st;
The virgin lilies, in their white,
Are clad but with the lawn of almost naked light.

The violet, Spring's little infant, stands
Girt in thy purple swaddling-bands:
On the fair tulip thou dost doat;
Thou cloth'st it in a gay and parti-coloured coat.

With flame condensed thou dost thy jewels fix,
And solid colours in it mix:
Flora herself envies to see
Flowers fairer than her own, and durable as she.

Ah, Goddess! would thou couldst thy hand withhold,
And be less liberal to gold!
Didst thou less value to it give,
Of how much care, alas! might'st thou poor man relieve!

HYMN TO LIGHT

To me the sun is more delightful far,
And all fair days much fairer are.
But few, ah! wondrous few, there be,
Who do not gold prefer, O Goddess! ev'n to thee.

Through the soft ways of heaven, and air, and sea,
Which open all their pores to thee,
Like a clear river thou dost glide,
And with thy living stream through the close channels
slide.

But, where firm bodies thy free course oppose, Gently thy source the land o'erflows; Takes there possession, and does make, Of colours mingled, Light, a thick and standing lake.

But the vast ocean of unbounded day
In th' empyræan heaven does stay.
Thy rivers, lakes, and springs, below,
From thence took first their rise, thither at last must flow.

TO

THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Philosophy, the great and only heir Of all that human knowledge which has been Unforfeited by man's rebellious sin,

Though full of years he do appear (Philosophy, I say, and call it He; For, whatsoe'er the painter's fancy be,

It a male-virtue seems to me),
Has still been kept in nonage till of late,
Nor managed or enjoyed his vast estate.
Three or four thousand years, one would have thought,
To ripeness and perfection might have brought

A science so well-bred and nurst, And of such hopeful parts too at the first: But, oh! the guardians and the tutors then (Some negligent and some ambitious men)

Would ne'er consent to set him free, Or his own natural powers to let him see, Lest that should put an end to their authority.

That his own business he might quite forget,
They amused him with the sports of wanton wit;
With the desserts of poetry they fed him,
Instead of solid meats t' increase his force;
Instead of vigorous exercise, they led him
Into the pleasant labyrinths of ever-fresh discourse;
Instead of carrying him to see
The riches which do hoarded for him lie
In Nature's endless treasury,
They chose his eye to entertain
(His curious but not covetous eye)

TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY

With painted scenes and pageants of the brain.

Some few exalted spirits this latter age has shown,
That laboured to assert the liberty
(From guardians who were now usurpers grown)
Of this old minor still, captived Philosophy;
But 'twas rebellion called, to fight
For such a long-oppressed right.

Bacon at last, a mighty man, arose
(Whom a wise king, and Nature, chose,
Lord chancellor of both their laws),
And boldly undertook the injured pupil's cause.

Authority—which did a body boast,
Though 'twas but air condensed, and stalked about,
Like some old giant's more gigantic ghost,
To terrify the learned rout
With the plain magic of true Reason's light—
He chased out of our sight;
Nor suffered living men to be misled
By the vain shadows of the dead;
To graves, from whence it rose, the conquered phantom
fled.

He broke that monstrous God which stood
In midst of th' orchard, and the whole did claim,
Which with a useless scythe of wood,
And something else not worth a name
(Both vast for show, yet neither fit
Or to defend, or to beget;
Ridiculous and senseless terrors!) made
Children and superstitious men afraid.
The orchard's open now, and free,
Bacon has broke the scare-crow deity:
Come, enter, all that will,
Behold the ripened fruit, come gather now your fill!
Yet still, methinks, we fain would be
Catching at the forbidden tree—
We would be like the Deity—

When truth and falsehood, good and evil, we, Without the senses' aid, within ourselves would see; For 'tis God only who can find All Nature in his mind.

From words, which are but pictures of the thought (Though we our thoughts from them perversely drew), To things, the mind's right object, he it brought: Like foolish birds, to painted grapes we flew; He sought and gathered for our use the true; And, when on heaps the chosen bunches lay, He pressed them wisely the mechanic way, Till all their juice did in one vessel join, Ferment into a nourishment divine,

The thirsty soul's refreshing wine.

The thirsty soul's refreshing wine.
Who to the life an exact piece would make,
Must not from others' work a copy take;
No, not from Rubens or Vandyke;
Much less content himself to make it like

Th' ideas and the images which lie
In his own fancy or his memory.
No, he before his sight must place
The natural and living face;
The real object must command

Each judgment of his eve and motion of his hand.

From these and all long errors of the way,
In which our wandering predecessors went,
And, like th' old Hebrews, many years did stray,
In deserts but of small extent,
Bacon, like Moses, led us forth at last:
The barren wilderness he past;
Did on the very border stand
Of the blest promised land;
And from the mountain's top of his exalted wit,
Saw it himself, and showed us it.
But life did never to one man allow
Time to discover worlds and conquer too;

TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY

Nor can so short a line sufficient be
To fathom the vast depths of Nature's sea.
The work he did we ought t' admire;
And were unjust if we should more require
From his few years, divided 'twixt th' excess
Of low affliction and high happiness:
For who on things remote can fix his sight,
That's always in a triumph or a fight?

From you, great champions! we expect to get These spacious countries, but discovered yet: Countries, where vet, instead of Nature, we Her images and idols worshipped see: These large and wealthy regions to subdue. Though Learning has whole armies at command, Ouartered about in every land. A better troop she ne'er together drew: Methinks, like Gideon's little band, God with design has picked out you, To do those noble wonders by a few: When the whole host he saw, "They are" (said he) "Too many to o'ercome for me"; And now he chooses out his men. Much in the way that he did then; Not those many whom he found Idly extended on the ground, To drink with their dejected head The stream, just so as by their mouths it fled: No; but those few who took the waters up, And made of their laborious hands the cup.

Thus you prepared, and in the glorious fight
Their wondrous pattern too you take;
Their old and empty pitchers first they brake,
And with their hands then lifted up the light.
Io! sound too the trumpets here!
Already your victorious lights appear;

New scenes of Heaven already we espy,
And crowds of golden worlds on high,
Which from the spacious plains of earth and sea
Could never yet discovered be,
By sailors' or Chaldeans' watchful eye.
Nature's great works no distance can obscure,
No smallness her near objects can secure;
Y' have taught the curious sight to press
Into the privatest recess
Of her imperceptible littleness!
Y' have learned to read her smallest hand,
And well begun her deepest sense to understand!

Mischief and true dishonour fall on those Who would to laughter or to scorn expose So virtuous and so noble a design, So human for its use, for knowledge so divine. The things which these proud men despise, and call Impertinent, and vain, and small, Those smallest things of nature let me know. Rather than all their greatest actions do ! Whoever would deposed Truth advance Into the throne usurped from it. Must feel at first the blows of Ignorance. And the sharp points of envious Wit. So, when, by various turns of the celestial dance. In many thousand years A star, so long unknown, appears, Though heaven itself more beauteous by it grow, It troubles and alarms the world below; Does to the wise a star, to fools a meteor, show.

With courage and success you the bold work begin; Your cradle has not idle been:
None e'er, but Hercules and you, would be
At five years age worthy a history.
And ne'er did Fortune better yet
Th' historian to the story fit:

TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY

As you from all old errors free
And purge the body of Philosophy;
So from all modern follies he
Has vindicated Eloquence and Wit.
His candid style like a clean stream does slide,
And his bright fancy, all the way,
Does like the sun-shine in it play;
It does, like Thames, the best of rivers, glide,
Where the God does not rudely overturn,
But gently pour, the crystal urn,
And with judicious hand does the whole current guide:
'T has all the beauties Nature can impart,
And all the comely dress, without the paint, of Art.

FROM THE MISTRESS

THE SPRING

Though you be absent here, I needs must say
The trees as beauteous are, and flowers as gay,
As ever they were wont to be;
Nay, the birds' rural music too
Is as melodious and free,
As if they sung to pleasure you:
I saw a rose-bud ope this morn—I'll swear
The blushing morning opened not more fair.

How could it be so fair, and you away?

How could the trees be beauteous, flowers so gay?

Could they remember but last year,

How you did them, they you, delight,

The sprouting leaves which saw you here,

And called their fellows to the sight,

Would, looking round for the same sight in vain,

Creep back into their silent barks again.

Where'er you walked, trees were as reverent made, As when of old Gods dwelt in every shade. Is't possible they should not know

What loss of honour they sustain,
That thus they smile and flourish now,
And still their former pride retain?
Dull creatures! 'tis not without cause that she,
Who fled the God of Wit, was made a tree.

THE SPRING

In ancient times, sure, they much wiser were,
When they rejoiced the Thracian verse to hear,
In vain did Nature bid them stay,
When Orpheus had his song begun—
They called their wondering roots away,
And bade them silent to him run.
How would those learned trees have followed you!
You would have drawn them and their poet too.

But who can blame them now? for, since you're gone, They're here the only fair and shine alone;
You did their natural rights invade;
Wherever you did walk or sit,
The thickest boughs could make no shade,
Although the sun had granted it:
The fairest flowers could please no more, near you,
Than painted flowers, set next to them, could do.

Whene'er then you come hither, that shall be
The time, which this to others is, to me.
The little joys which here are now,
The name of punishments do bear;
When by their sight they let us know
How we deprived of greater are:
'Tis you the best of seasons with you bring;
This is for beasts, and that for men, the Spring.

THE CHANGE

Love in her sunny eyes does basking play; Love walks the pleasant mazes of her hair; Love does on both her lips for ever stray, And sows and reaps a thousand kisses there: In all her outward parts Love's always seen; But, oh! he never went within.

Within, Love's foes, his greatest foes, abide,
Malice, Inconstancy, and Pride:
So, the earth's face, trees, herbs, and flowers, do dress,
With other beauties numberless;
But at the centre darkness is, and hell;
There wicked spirits, and there the damned, dwell.

With me, alas! quite contrary it fares;
Darkness and death lies in my weeping eyes,
Despair, and paleness, in my face appears,
And grief, and fear, Love's greatest enemies;
But, like the Persian tyrant, Love within
Keeps his proud court, and ne'er is seen.

Oh! take my heart, and by that means you'll prove Within too stored enough of love:
Give me but yours, I'll by that change so thrive,
That love in all my parts shall live.
So powerful is this change, it render can
My outside Woman, and your inside Man.

CLAD ALL IN WHITE

CLAD ALL IN WHITE

Fairest thing that shines below,
Why in this robe dost thou appear?
Wouldst thou a white most perfect show,
Thou must at all no garment wear:
Thou wilt seem much whiter so,
Than winter when 'tis clad with snow.

'Tis not the linen shows so fair;
Her skin shines through, and makes it bright:
So clouds themselves like suns appear,
When the sun pierces them with light
So, lilies in a glass inclose,
The glass will seem as white as those

Thou now one heap of beauty art; Nought outwards, or within, is foul: Condensed beams make every part; Thy body's clothed like thy soul; Thy soul, which does itself display, Like a star placed i' th' milky way.

Such robes the saints departed wear, Woven all with light divine; Such their exalted bodies are, And with such full glory shine: But they regard not mortals' pain; Men pray, I fear, to both in vain.

Yet, seeing thee so gently pure,
My hopes will needs continue still;
Thou wouldst not take this garment, sure
When thou hadst an intent to kill!
Of peace and yielding who would doubt,
When the white flag he sees hung out?

MY HEART DISCOVERED

Her body is so gently bright, Clear and transparent to the sight (Clear as fair crystal to the view, Yet soft as that, ere stone it grew) That through her flesh, methinks, is seen The brighter soul that dwells within: Our eyes the subtile covering pass, And see that lily through its glass. I through her breast her heart espy, As souls in hearts do souls descry: I see't with gentle motions beat: I see light in 't, but find no heat. Within, like angels in the sky. A thousand gilded thoughts do fly; Thoughts of bright and noblest kind. Fair and chaste as mother-mind. But, oh! what other heart is there. Which sighs and crowds to hers so near? 'Tis all on flame, and does, like fire, To that, as to its heaven, aspire! The wounds are many in't and deep; Still does it bleed, and still does weep! Whose ever-wretched heart it be. I cannot choose but grieve to see: What pity in my breast does reign! Methinks I feel too all its pain. So torn, and so defaced, it lies, That it could ne'er be known by th' eyes: But, oh! at last I heard it groan, And knew by th' voice that 'twas mine own.

MY HEART DISCOVERED

So poor Alcione, when she saw
A shipwrecked body tow'rds her draw,
Beat by the waves, let fall a tear,
Which only then did pity wear:
But, when the corpse on shore were cast,
Which she her husband found at last,
What should the wretched widow do?
Grief changed her straight; away she flew,
Turned to a bird: and so at last shall I
Both from my murdered heart and murderer fly.

THE SOUL

If mine eves do e'er declare They've seen a second thing that's fair; Or ears, that they have music found, Besides thy voice, in any sound; If my taste do ever meet, After thy kiss, with aught that's sweet: If my abused touch allow Aught to be smooth, or soft, but you; If what seasonable springs, Or the Eastern summer, brings, Do my smell persuade at all Aught perfume, but thy breath, to call; If all my senses' objects be Not contracted into thee. And so through thee more powerful pass, As beams do through a burning-glass; If all things that in nature are Either soft, or sweet, or fair, Be not in thee so epitomised, That nought material's not comprised: May I as worthless seem to thee As all, but thou, appears to me!

If I ever anger know,
Till some wrong be done to you;
If Gods or Kings my envy move,
Without their crowns crowned by thy love;
If ever I an hope admit,
Without thy image stamped on it;

THE SOUL

Or any fear, till I begin To find that you're concerned therein; If a joy e'er come to me. That tastes of any thing but thee: If any sorrow touch my mind. Whilst you are well, and not unkind: If I a minute's space debate, Whether I shall curse and hate The things beneath thy hatred fall, Though all the world, myself and all; And for love-if ever I Approach to it again so nigh. As to allow a toleration To the least glimmering inclination: If thou alone dost not controul All those tyrants of my soul, And to thy beauties ty'st them so, That constant they as habits grow; If any passion of my heart, By any force, or any art, Be brought to move one step from thee, Mayst thou no passion have for me!

If my busy Imagination
Do not thee in all things fashion,
So that all fair species be
Hieroglyphic marks of thee;
If when she her sports does keep
(The lower soul being all asleep)
She play one dream, with all her art,
Where thou hast not the longest part;
If aught get place in my remembrance,
Without some badge of thy resemblance—
So that thy parts become to me
A kind of art of memory;—
If my Understanding do
Seek any knowledge but of you;

If she do near thy body prize
Her bodies of philosophies;
If she to the Will do shew
Aught desirable but you;
Or, if that would not rebel,
Should she another doctrine tell;
If my Will do not resign
All her liberty to thine;
If she would not follow thee,
Though Fate and thou shouldst disagree;
And if (for I a curse will give,
Such as shall force thee to believe)
My soul be not entirely thine;
May thy dear body ne'er be mine!

THE LONG LIFE

THE LONG LIFE

Love from Time's wings hath stol'n the feathers, sure He has, and put them to his own; For hours of late as long as days endure, And very minutes hours are grown.

The various motions of the turning year
Belong not now at all to me:
Each summer's night does Lucy's now appear,
Each winter's day St Barnaby.

How long a space since first I loved it is!

To look into a glass I fear;

And am surprised with wonder when I miss

Grey-hairs and wrinkles there.

Th' old Patriarchs' age, and not their happiness too, Why does hard Fate to us restore? Why does Love's fire thus to mankind renew What the Flood washed away before?

Sure those are happy people that complain O' th' shortness of the days of man: Contract mine, Heaven! and bring them back again To th' ordinary span.

If when your gift, long life, I disapprove,
I too ingrateful seem to be;
Punish me justly, Heaven; make her to love,
And then 'twill be too short for me.

3

FOR HOPE

Hope! of all ills that men endure, The only cheap and universal cure! Thou captive's freedom, and thou sick man's health! Thou loser's victory, and thou beggar's wealth! Thou manna, which from heaven we eat, To every taste a several meat! Thou strong retreat! thou sure-entailed estate,

Which nought has power to alienate! Thou pleasant, honest flatterer! for none Flatter unhappy men, but thou alone!

Hope! thou first-fruits of happiness! Thou gentle dawning of a bright success! Thou good preparative, without which our joy Does work too strong, and, whilst it cures, destroy! Who out of Fortune's reach dost stand. And art a blessing still in hand! Whilst thee, her earnest-money, we retain, We certain are to gain, Whether she her bargain break, or else fulfil: Thou only good, not worse for ending ill!

Brother of Faith! 'twixt whom and thee The joys of heaven and earth divided be! Though Faith be heir, and have the fixt estate, Thy portion vet in moveables is great.

Happiness itself's all one In thee, or in possession!

Only the future's thine, the present his! Thine's the more hard and noble bliss: Best apprehender of our joys! which hast

FOR HOPE

Hope! thou sad lovers' only friend!
Thou Way, that mayst dispute it with the End!
For Love, I fear, 's a fruit that does delight
The taste itself less than the smell and sight.

Fruition more deceitful is

Than thou canst be, when thou dost miss;
Men leave thee by obtaining, and straight flee
Some other way again to thee;
And that's a pleasant country, without doubt,
To which all soon return that travel out.

MY PICTURE

Here, take my likeness with you, whilst 'tis so;
For, when from hence you go,
The next sun's rising will behold
Me pale, and lean, and old:
The man who did this picture draw,
Will swear next day my face he never saw.

I really believe, within a while,

If you upon this shadow smile,

Your presence will such vigour give

(Your presence, which makes all things live!)

And absence so much alter me,

This will the substance, I the shadow, be.

When from your well-wrought cabinet you take it,
And your bright looks awake it,
Ah! be not frighted if you see
The new-souled picture gaze on thee,
And hear it breathe a sigh or two;
For those are the first things that it will do.

My rival-image will be then thought blest,
And laugh at me as dispossest;
But thou, who (if I know thee right)
I' th' substance dost not much delight,
Wilt rather send again for me,
Who then shall but my picture's picture be.

LOVE'S VISIBILITY

LOVE'S VISIBILITY

With much of pain, and all the art I knew, Have I endeavoured hitherto To hide my love, and yet all will not do.

The world perceives it, and, it may be, she; Though so discreet and good she be, By hiding it, to teach that skill to me.

Men without love have oft so cunning grown,
That something like it they have shown;
But none who had it ever seemed t' have none.

Love's of a strangely open, simple kind, Can no arts or disguises find, But thinks none sees it 'cause itself is blind.

The very eye betrays our inward smart; Love of himself left there a part, When thorough it he passed into the heart.

Or if by chance the face betray not it, But keep the secret wisely, yet, Like drunkenness, into the tongue 'twill get.

RESOLVED TO LOVE

I wonder what the grave and wise
Think of all us that love;
Whether our pretty fooleries
Their mirth or anger move:
They understand not breath that words does want;
Our sighs to them are insignificant.

One of them saw me, th' other day,

Touch the dear hand which I admire;

My soul was melting straight away,

And dropt before the fire;

This silly wise-man, who pretends to know,

Asked why I looked so pale, and trembled so?

Another from my mistress' door

Saw me with eyes all watery come;

Nor could the hidden cause explore,

But thought some smoke was in the room:

Such ignorance from unwounded learning came;

He knew tears made by smoke, but not by flame.

If learned in other things you be,
And have in love no skill,
For God's sake keep your arts from me,
For I'll be ignorant still:
Study or action others may embrace;
My love's my business, and my books her face.

These are but trifles, I confess,
Which me, weak mortal! move;
Nor is your busy-seriousness
Less trifling than my love:
The wisest king, who from his sacred breast
Pronounced all vanity, chose it for the best.

THE HEART BREAKING

THE HEART BREAKING

It gave a piteous groan, and so it broke; In vain it something would have spoke: The love within too strong for 't was, Like poison put into a Venice-glass.

I thought that this some remedy might prove; But oh, the mighty serpent Love, Cut by this chance in pieces small, In all still lived, and still it stung in all.

And now, alas! each little broken part
Feels the whole pain of all my heart;
And every smallest corner still
Lives with the torment which the whole did kill.

Even so rude armies, when the field they quit, And into several quarters get; Each troop does spoil and ruin more Than all joined in one body did before.

How many Loves reign in my bosom now!

How many loves, yet all of you!

Thus have I changed with evil fate

My Monarch-love into a Tyrant-state.

THE INCONSTANT

I never yet could see that face
Which had no dart for me;
From fifteen years, to fifty's space,
They all victorious be.
Love, thou'rt a devil, if I may call thee one
For sure in me thy name is Legion.

Colour or shape, good limbs, or face, Goodness, or wit, in all I find; In motion or in speech a grace; If all fail, yet 'tis womankind; And I'm so weak, the pistol need not be Double or treble charged to murder me.

If tall, the name of proper slays;
If fair, she's pleasant as the light;
If low, her prettiness does please;
If black, what lover loves not night?
If yellow-haired, I love, lest it should be
Th' excuse to others for not loving me.

The fat, like plenty, fills my heart;
The lean, with love makes me too so:
If straight, her body's Cupid dart
To me; if crooked, 'tis his bow:
Nay, age itself does me to rage incline,
And strength to women gives, as well as wine.

Just half as large as Charity
My richly-landed Love's become;
And, judged aright, is Constancy,
Though it take up a larger room:
Him, who loves always one, why should they call
More constant than the man loves always all?

THE INCONSTANT

Thus with unwearied wings I flee
Through all Love's gardens and his fields;
And, like the wise, industrious bee
No weed but honey to me yields!
Honey still spent this diligence still supplies,
Though I return not home with laden thighs.

My soul at first indeed did prove
Of pretty strength against a dart,
Till I this habit got of love;
But my consumed and wasted heart,
Once burnt to tinder with a strong desire,
Since that, by every spark is set on fire.

DISCRETION

Discreet! what means this word discreet?

A curse on all discretion!

This barbarous term you will not meet
In all Love's lexicon.

Jointure, portion, gold, estate,
Houses, household-stuff, or land
(The low conveniences of Fate),
Are Greek no lovers understand.

Believe me, beauteous one! when love
Enters into a breast,
The two first things it does remove
Are friends and interest.

Passion's half blind, nor can endure
The careful, scrupulous eyes;
Or else I could not love, I'm sure,
One who in love were wise.

Men in such tempests tost about,
Will, without grief or pain,
Cast all their goods and riches out,
Themselves their port to gain.

As well might martyrs, who do choose

That sacred death to take,

Mourn for the clothes which they must lose,

When they're bound naked to the stake.

THE WAITING MAID

THE WAITING MAID

Thy Maid! ah! find some nobler theme
Whereon thy doubts to place;
Nor by a low suspect blaspheme
The glories of thy face.

Alas! she makes thee shine so fair, So exquisitely bright, That her dim lamp must disappear Before thy potent light.

Three hours each morn in dressing thee
Maliciously are spent;
And make that beauty tyranny,
That's else a civil government.

Th' adorning thee with so much art
Is but a barbarous skill;
'Tis like the poisoning of a dart
Too apt before to kill.

The ministering angels none can see;
'Tis not their beauty or face,
For which by men they worshipped be;
But their high office and their place,
Thou art my Goddess, my Saint she;
I pray to her, only to pray to thee.

SONG FROM LOVE'S RIDDLE

The merry waves dance up and down and play,
Sport is granted to the sea.
Birds are the choristers of the empty air,
Sport is never wanting there.
The ground doth smile of the spring's flowery birth
Sport is granted to the earth.
The fire its cheering flame on high doth rear,
Sport is never wanting there.
If all the elements, the earth, the sea,
Air and fire, so merry be,
Why is man's mirth so seldom and so small,
Who is compounded of them all?

TO HIS MISTRESS

TO HIS MISTRESS

Tyrian dye why do you wear,
You whose cheeks best scarlet are?
Why do you so fondly pin
Pure linen o'er your skin,
(Your skin that's whiter far)
Casting a dusky cloud before a star?

Why bears your neck a golden chain?

Did nature make your hair in vain,

Of gold most pure and fine?

With gems why do you shine?

They, neighbours to your eyes,

Show but like Phosphor when the sun doth rise.

I would have all my mistress' parts
Owe more to nature than to arts,
I would not woo the dress,
Or one whose nights give less
Contentment than the day,
She's fair, whose beauty only makes her gay.

For 'tis not buildings make a court,
Or pomp, but 'tis the king's resort:
If Jupiter downpour
Himself, and in a shower
Hide such bright majesty,
Less than a golden shower it cannot be.

TO MR HOBBES

Vast bodies of philosophy I oft have seen and read: But all are bodies dead, Or bodies by art fashioned; I never vet the living soul could see, But in thy books and thee! 'Tis only God can know Whether the fair Idea thou dost show Agree entirely with his own or no. This I dare boldly tell, 'Tis so like truth, 'twill serve our turn as well. Just, as in Nature, thy proportions be, As full of concord their variety. As firm the parts upon their centre rest, And all so solid are, that they, at least As much as Nature, emptiness detest.

Long did the mighty Stagyrite retain
The universal intellectual reign,
Saw his own country's short-lived leopard slain;
The stronger Roman eagle did out-fly,
Oftener renewed his age, and saw that die.
Mecca itself, in spite of Mahomet, possest,
And, chased by a wild deluge from the East,
His monarchy new planted in the West.
But, as in time each great imperial race
Degenerates, and gives some new one place:

So did this noble empire waste, Sunk by degrees from glories past, And in the School-men's hands it perished quite at last:

TO MR HOBBES

Then nought but words it grew,
And those all barbarous too:
It perished, and it vanished there,
The life and soul, breathed out, became but empty air

The fields, which answered well the ancients' plough, Spent and out-worn, return no harvest now; In barren age wild and unglorious lie,

And boast of past fertility,
The poor relief of present poverty.
Food and fruit we now must want,
Unless new lands we plant.

We break up tombs with sacrilegious hands; Old rubbish we remove;

To walk in ruins, like vain ghosts, we love, And with fond divining wands

We search among the dead For treasures buried:

Whilst still the liberal earth does hold So many virgin-mines of undiscovered gold.

The Baltic, Euxine, and the Caspian, And slender-limbed Mediterranean, Seem narrow creeks to thee, and only fit For the poor wretched fisher-boats of wit: Thy nobler vessel the vast ocean tries,

And nothing sees but seas and skies, Till unknown regions it descries,

Thou great Columbus of the golden lands of new philosophies!

Thy task was harder much than his; For thy learned America is

Not only found-out first by thee,

And rudely left to future industry;
But thy eloquence, and thy wit,

Has planted, peopled, built, and civilised it.

I little thought before (Nor, being my own self so poor, Could comprehend so vast a store)

That all the wardrobe of rich Eloquence
Could have afforded half enough,
Of bright, of new, and lasting stuff,
To clothe the mighty limbs of thy gigantic sense.
Thy solid reason, like the shield from heaven
To the Trojan hero given.

Too strong to take a mark from any mortal dart, Yet shines with gold and gems in every part, And wonders on it graved by the learned hand of Art!

A shield that gives delight

Ev'n to the enemies' sight,

when they're sure to lose the

Then, when they're sure to lose the combat by 't.

Nor can the snow, which cold Age does shed
Upon thy reverend head,
Quench or allay the noble fires within;
But all which thou hast been,
And all that Youth can be, thou'rt yet!
So fully still dost thou
Enjoy the manhood and the bloom of Wit,
And all the natural heat, but not the fever too!

And all the natural near, but not the lever too!

So contraries on Ætna's top conspire;

Here hoary frosts, and by them breaks-out fire!

A secure peace the faithful neighbours keep;

Th' embeldered snow port to the flavor does sleep

Th' emboldened snow next to the flame does sleep And, if we weigh, like thee,

Nature and Causes, we shall see
That thus it needs must be—
To things immortal, Time can do no wrong,
And that which never is to die, for ever must be young.

BRUTUS

BRUTUS

Excellent Brutus! of all human race The best, till Nature was improved by Grace; Till men above themselves Faith raised more

Than Reason above beasts before.

Virtue was thy life's centre, and from thence
Did silently and constantly dispense

The gentle, vigorous influence
To all the wide and fair circumference;
And all the parts upon it leaned so easily,
Obeyed the mighty force so willingly,
That none could discord or disorder see

In all their contrariety:

Each had his motion natural and free,

And the whole no more moved than the whole world could be.

From thy strict rule some think that thou didst swerve (Mistaken, honest men!) in Cæsar's blood; What mercy could the tyrant's life deserve, From him who killed himself, rather than serve? Th' heroic exaltations of Good

Are so far from understood,
We count them Vice: alas! our sight's so ill,
That things which swiftest move seem to stand still:
We look not upon Virtue in her height,
On her supreme Idea, brave and bright.

On her supreme Idea, brave and bright, In the original light;

But as her beams reflected pass Through our own Nature or ill-custom's glass:

As 'tis no wonder, so,
If with dejected eye

F

In standing pools we seek the sky, That stars, so high above, should seem to us below.

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Can we stand by and see

Our mother robbed, and bound, and ravished be,

Yet not to her assistance stir,

Pleased with the strength and beauty of the ravisher?

Or shall we fear to kill him, if before

The cancelled name of friend he bore?
Ingrateful Brutus do they call?
Ingrateful Cæsar, who could Rome enthrall!
An act more barbarous and unnatural
(In th' exact balance of true virtue tried)
Than his successor Nero's parricide!

There's none but Brutus could deserve
That all men else should wish to serve,
And Cæsar's usurped place to him should proffer;
None can deserve't but he who would refuse the offer.

Ill Fate assumed a body thee t'affright,
And wrapped itself i' th' terrors of the night:
"I'll meet thee at Philippi," said the sprite;
"I'll meet thee there," saidst thou,
With such a voice, and such a brow,
As put the trembling ghost to sudden flight;
It vanished, as a taper's light
Goes out when spirits appear in sight.
One would have thought't had heard the morning crow,

Or seen her well-appointed star

Come marching up the Eastern hill afar.

Nor durst it in Philippi's field appear,

But unseen attacked thee there:

Had it presumed in any shape thee to oppose,

Thou shouldst have forced it back upon thy foes:

Or slain't, like Cæsar, though it be A conqueror and a monarch mightier far than he.

What joy can human things to us afford,
When we see perish thus, by odd events,
Ill men, and wretched accidents,
The best cause and best man that ever drew a sword?

BRUTUS

When we see
The false Octavius and wild Antony,
God-like Brutus! conquer thee?
What can we say, but thine own tragic word—
That virtue, which had worshipped been by thee
As the most solid Good, and greatest Deity,
By this fatal proof became
An idol only, and a name?

Hold, noble Brutus! and restrain
The bold voice of thy generous disdain:
These mighty gulfs are yet
Too deep for all thy judgment and thy wit.
The time's set forth already which shall quell
Stiff Reason, when it offers to rebel;
Which these great secrets shall unseal,
And new philosophies reveal:
A few years more, so soon hast thou not died,
Would have confounded human Virtue's pride,
And shewed thee a God crucified.

THE ECSTASY

I leave mortality, and things below;
I have no time in compliments to waste;
Farewell to ye all in haste,
For I am called to go.
A whirlwind bears up my dull feet,
Th' officious clouds beneath them meet;
And lo! I mount, and lo!
How small the biggest parts of earth's proud title show!

Where shall I find the noble British land?

Lo; I at last a northern speck espy,

Which in the sea does lie,

And seems a grain o' th' sand!

For this will any sin, or bleed?

Of civil wars is this the meed?

And is it this, alas! which we

(O irony of words!) do call Great Britannie?

I pass by th' arched magazines which hold Th' eternal stores of frost, and rain, and snow;

Dry and secure I go,
Nor shake with fear or cold:
Without affright or wonder
I meet clouds charged with thunder,
And lightnings, in my way,
-Like harmless lambent fires about my temples play.

Now into a gentle sea of rolling flame I'm plunged, and still mount higher there, As flames mount up through air: So perfect, yet so tame,

THE ECSTASY

So great, so pure, so bright a fire,
Was that unfortunate desire,
My faithful breast did cover,
Then, when I was of late a wretched mortal lover.

Through several orbs which one fair planet bear,
Where I behold distinctly as I pass
The hints of Galileo's glass,
I touch at last the spangled sphere:
Here all th' extended sky
Is but one galaxy,
'Tis all so bright and gay,
And the joint eyes of night make up a perfect day.

Where am I now? Angels and God is here;
An unexhausted ocean of delight
Swallows my senses quite,
And drowns all What, or How, or Where!
Not Paul, who first did thither pass,
And this great world's Columbus was,
The tyrannous pleasure could express.
Oh, 'tis too much for man! but let it ne'er be less!

The mighty Elijah mounted so on high,
That second man who leaped the ditch where all
The rest of mankind fall,
And went not downwards to the sky!
With much of pomp and show
(As conquering kings in triumph go)
Did he to heaven approach,
And wondrous was his way, and wondrous was his coach.

'Twas gaudy all; and rich in every part
Of essences, of gems; and spirit of gold
Was its substantial mould,
Drawn forth by chemic angels' art.

Here with moon-beams 'twas silvered bright,
There double-gilt with the sun's light;
And mystic shapes cut round in it,
Figures that did transcend a vulgar angel's wit.

The horses were of tempered lightning made,
Of all that in Heaven's beauteous pastures feed
The noblest, sprightful'st breed;
And flaming manes their necks arrayed:
They all were shod with diamond,
Not such as here are found,
But such light solid ones as shine
On the transparent rocks o' th' Heaven-crystalline.

Thus mounted the great Prophet to the skies;
Astonished men, who oft had seen stars fall,
Or that which so they call,
Wondered from hence to see one rise.
The soft clouds melted him away;
The snow and frosts which in it lay
Awhile the sacred footsteps bore;
The wheels and horses' hoofs hizzed as they passed them o'er!

He passed by th' moon and planets, and did fright All the worlds there which at this meteor gazed,
And their astrologers amazed
With th' unexampled sight.
But where he stopped will ne'er be known,
Till Phœnix Nature, aged grown,
To a better thing do aspire.

And mount herself, like him, to eternity in fire.



NOTES

NOTES

THE MOTTO. -- Page 7

Welcome great Stagyrite, etc.—Aristotle was called the Stagyrite from the name of his birthplace, Stagira in Macedonia. He became tutor to Alexander when the latter was aged fifteen.

ODE OF WIT .- Page 9

Multiplying glass.—A glass or lens with several plane sides which represents a single object to the eye as if it were many.

The numbers, etc.—Amphion, the son of Zeus and Antiope, being presented with a lyre by Hermes, attained to such skill in music that when he and his brother desired to fortify Thebes, the very stones were moved by his strains to build themselves up into the wall.

When Bajazet, etc.—A character in Marlowe's play Tamberlaine, of which Lamb says: "I had the same difficulty (or rather much more) in culling a few sane lines from this as from the preceding play (Lust's Dominion). The lunes of Tamburlaine are perfect 'midsummer madness."

THE CHRONICLE.—Page 12

Holinshed or Stow.—Holinshed (d. 1580?) wrote the Chronicles of England from the Norman Conquest to the Present Time, including in his work much legendary information on earlier days. His book, which is very voluminous and a most valuable storehouse of historical information, was the source of many of the plots of Shakespeare and other Elizabethan dramatists.

NOTES

Stow was another Elizabethan historian. His chief works were: A Summary of English Chronicles; Annales, or a General Chronicle of England from Brute until the present year of Christ, 1580; and A Survey of London, 1589.

ON THE DEATH OF MR WILLIAM HERVEY .- Page 17

A strong and mighty influence.—This must be understood as an astrological allusion to the influence of the planet under whose sign both Cowley and Hervey were born. The word was used with this meaning alone until comparatively modern times.

The Ledwan Stars.—Castor and Pollux (or Polyduces), the sons of Zeus and Leda. According to some versions of the fable, Pollux alone was the son of Zeus, while Castor was the son of Tyndarus, and consequently mortal. Castor having fallen in battle, Pollux implored the gods that he might share his fate, whereupon Zeus rewarded the affection of the brothers by placing them among the stars as the constellation Gemini.

Not Phabus grieved, etc.—Cyparissa (a youth beloved by Apollo) became a cypress tree from grief at having accidentally killed a favourite stag.

Just like the first and highest sphere.—The Primum Mobile. According to the Ptolemaic system of Astronomy, the earth was encircled by spheres, named after the Moon, Mercury, Venus, the Sun, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn. Beyond these was the sphere of the Fixed Stars, which was supposed to make one revolution in twenty-four hours. To account for various irregularities in the heavenly motions two extra spheres were added in the Middle Ages—viz. the Crystalline and the Primum Mobile or "first moved," which was supposed to communicate its movement to all the inferior spheres.

THE TREE OF KNOWLEDGE.-Page 22

That right Porphyrian tree.—Porphyry was one of the Neo Platonist philosophers who flourished during the third century.

NOTES

He was not himself an original thinker, but devoted his efforts to popularising the system of his master Plotinus. The philosophy of the latter dealt with (1) the nature of God, whom he called "the One," (2) the origin of the human soul, (3) the manner in which it had departed from its first estate, and (4) the stages, comprising the practice of the civil, purifying, and ascetic virtues, through which it must pass before, by contemplation, it could attain once more to unity with the Eternal.

ON THE DEATH OF MR CRASHAW. - Page 24

Crashaw, the author of Steps to the Altar, was born about 1615. He became a Roman Catholic and died at Loretto in 1650. He is usually classed with Herbert and Vaughan as belonging to the group of religious writers affected by metaphysical Euphuism.

And though Pan's death long since all oracles broke.—This is a reference to the tradition that at the time of the death of Christ, a pilot, sailing in the Levant, received supernatural instructions to proclaim the death of Pan as he passed the island Palodes. Which being done, there "was such piteous outcries and dreadful shrieking as hath not been the like. By which Pan, though of some be understood the great Satanas, whose kingdom was at that time by Christ conquered: yet I think it more properly meant of the death of Christ, the only and very Pan, then suffering for his flock."—(Notes to Spenser's Shepherd's Calendar). Cf. E. B. Browning's Great Pan is dead.

His faith perhaps, etc.—Compare Pope.

"For modes of faith let graceless zealots fight, His can't be wrong whose life is in the right."

THE SWALLOW.—Page 38

Well't had been had Tereus made Thee as dumb as Philomel.— Tereus, son of Ares, king of Macedonia, having married Philomela, while his first wife, her sister Procne, was still alive, cut out her tongue, in order that she might not reveal his faithlessness. She, however, disclosed the secret by weaving words into a web, which

led Procne to kill Itys, her son by Tereus. Tereus, enraged, pursued the sisters with an axe, but the gods protected them by turning Philomela into a nightingale and Procne into a swallow.

Ode. Sitting and Drinking in Sir Francis Drake's Chair.—Page 39

The pious wanderer, etc.—Æneas, the hero of the Æneid, gained the epithet of "pious," from his filial piety in carrying away his aged father Anchises on his shoulders through the flames of Troy.

The first poetic ship of Greece.—The Argo, in which Jason and his companions embarked in order to seek the Golden Fleece. The constellation Argo Navis is called after this ship.

HYMN TO LIGHT.-Page 46

Thou golden shower of a true Jove!—A reference to the story of Danæ, who, being secluded from man in a brazen tower, was visited by Jove in a shower of gold, and became the mother of Perseus.

Thou Scythian-like, etc.—The Scythians were nomadic and pastoral races inhabiting the territories north and east of the Black and Caspian Seas.

Career.—In the 1674 edition this word is written carriere.

The antic atoms fly.—Antic, which is a doublet of antique, was, in the sixteenth century, adopted from the Italian antico, with the sense of grotesque, fantastic. A somewhat similar process of change may be observed at the present day in Egypt, where the word antica (also from the Italian) is used by the natives to denote all curiosities, often quite irrespective of age.

Th' Empyrean Heaven.—In ancient cosmology the Empyrean was the highest Heaven of all, the sphere of the pure element of fire. In Milton's scheme it was that portion of space in which Heaven was situated.

TO THE ROYAL SOCIETY .- Page 50

The Royal Society was founded in 1645. We are told in a contemporary account that at this time "divers worthy persons, inquisitive into natural philosophy and other parts of human learning, did, by agreements, meet weekly in London on a certain day, to treat and discourse of such affairs." The society numbered among its members various medical men—Dr Wilkins, afterwards Bishop of Chester; Forster, Professor of Astronomy at Gresham College; Wallis, a famous mathematician, and others; and Wallis tells us that amongst the subjects discussed were, the circulation of the blood, the Copernican hypothesis, the nature of comets, the improvement of telescopes, the weight of air, etc. In 1662 the society was incorporated by charter as the Royal Society of London for the Promotion of Natural Knowledge.

By sailors' or Chaldwans' watchful eye.—"The Chaldwans were most renowned in astrologie that ever were anie,"—Marbeek. Book of Notes.

And ne'er did Fortune better yet Th' Historian to the story fit.

—The historian in question was the Rev. Thomas Sprat, who afterwards became Dean of Westminster and Bishop of Rochester. He wrote the Life prefixed to the first posthumous edition of Cowley's works. His History of the Royal Society was written by 1664, but not published till 1667. In the entry for August 16th, 1667, Pepys says: "In the New Exchange with my wife, where at my booksellers I saw 'The History of the Royall Society,' which, I believe, is a fine book, and have bespoke one in quires."

Cowley's Ode was written in 1667.

THE SPRING .- Page 56

She who fled the God of Wit, was made a tree.—Daphne, the daughter of the river Peneus and the goddess Terra, being terrified at the addresses paid to her by Apollo, tried to escape him by flight. The gods befriended her, and changed her into a laurel.

When they rejoiced the Thracian verse to hear.—Like Amphion and Apollo, Orpheus is fabled to have had the power of influencing inanimate objects by the music of his lyre.

MY HEART DISCOVERED .- Page 60

So poor Alcione, etc.—The story is told by Virgil and Ovid. Alcyone, the daughter of Œlus, during the absence of her husband, Ceyx, had a dream in which she was warned of his death. The next day, while wandering on the seashore, his dead body was cast up at her feet. In her inordinate grief she threw herself into the sea, and both she and her husband were changed into kingfishers, called Halcyons, after her. The "halcyon days" were fourteen days in mid-winter, during which, according to the belief of the ancient Sicilians, the kingfishers laid and incubated their eggs upon the surface of the sea, which remained undisturbed during the whole period.

THE LONG LIFE.—Page 65

Each summer's night does Lucy's now appear, Each winter's day St Barnaby. — St Lucia's day is December 13, that of St Barnabas June 11.

RESOLVED TO LOVE .- Page 70

This silly wise man.—The accent here must fall upon wise not upon man. A similar accentuation of compounds of this kind is frequently found in Shakespeare.—Cp. "My men should call me lord; I am your goodman."—Taming of the Shrew.

THE HEART BREAKING .- Page 71

Like poison put into a Venice glass.—According to a superstition of the Middle Ages, the fine Venetian glass, out of which drinking glasses were made, had the useful property of breaking at the touch of poison.

And now, alas! each little broken part Feels the whole pain of all my heart.—Cp. Byron. Childe Harold.

"And thus the heart may break, yet brokenly live on Even as a broken mirror, which the glass In every fragment multiplies, and makes A thousand images of one that was, The same and still the more, the more it breaks."

And in the Schoolmen's hands.—The Schoolmen were certain theologians of the Middle Ages, so called from the monastic schools in which they lectured. Amongst them may be mentioned Anselm, Lanfranc, Pierre Lombard, Thomas Aquinas, and John Duns Scotus.

"The shield from Heaven To the Trojan hero given."— This shield, made by Vulcan for Æneas, is described in the eighth Book of the Æneid. Upon it was represented the future history of the Romans, and it was so strong that no human-made weapons could penetrate it.

To MR Hobbes.-Page 78

Saw his own country's short-lived leopard slain.—In the Book of Daniel, chap. vii. verse 6, the Grecian empire is represented as a leopard "which had upon the back of it four wings of a fowl. The beast had also four heads, and dominion was given to it."

Mecca itself, in spite of Mahomet possessed. — "In spite of Mahomet, because his law, being adapted to the barbarous humour of those people he had to deal withal, and aiming only at greatness of empire by the sword, forbids all the studies of learning; which nevertheless flourished admirably under the Saracen monarchy.

"For Aristotle's philosophy was in great esteem among the Arabians or Saracens, witness those many excellent books upon him, or according to his principles, written by Averroes, Avicenna, Avempace, and divers others."—Cowley.

BRUTUS.—Page 81

On her supreme Idea.—Cowley uses the word Idea in the now obsolete sense of ideal and supreme development, a meaning approximating to that of Plato, who, by the Idea of a thing, meant its perfect and eternally existing architype or pattern.

One would have thought't had heard the morning crow.—It was a Christian superstition that all evil spirits and ghosts vanished

when the cock announced the approach of dawn. The cock was placed on church spires in memory of Peter's transgression, and according to some authorities, it is rather in its sacred character as the emblem of watchfulness, that it has power against ghosts than as "the bird of dawning."

THE ECSTASY.—Page 84

This poem is a good example of the artificial and fantastic style often assumed by Cowley.

A gentle sea of rolling flame.—In the Ptolemaic cosmology, which in Cowley's time had not been entirely vanquished by the Copernican (as may well be seen by a reference to "Paradise Lost") the earth is represented as being immediately surrounded by the three elements of air, water, and fire, beyond which came the ten spheres in their order.—Cp. note, On the Death of Mr William Hervey, p. 89.

K. B. L.

CONTEMPORARY AND REPRESENTA-TIVE OPINIONS ON COWLEY

- "Our Wit, 'till Cowley did its Lustre raise,
 May be resembled to the first three Days
 In which did shine only such streaks of Light
 As served but to distinguish Day from Night:
 But Wit breaks forth, in all that he has done,
 Like Light when 'twas united in the Sun."
- "... Foreign Nations now may borrow more From Cowley, than we could from them before."

 -Anon.
- "Cowley with Words as full and Thoughts as high As ever Pindar did, does fly."
- "As Fire aspiring, as the Sea profound,
 Nothing in Nature can his Fancy bound . . .
 To his illuminated eye
 All things created open lie,
 That all his Thoughts so clear and so perspicuous be,
 That whatsoever he describes we see;
 Our Souls are with his Passions fired,
 And he who does but read him is inspired."

 —Ode upon the Death of Mr Cowley. T. Higgons.
- "Old Mother Wit, and Nature gave Shakespear and Fletcher all they have; In Spenser and in Johnson, Art Of slower Nature got the Start;

But both in him so equal are,
None knows which bears the happiest Share;
To him no Author was unknown,
Yet what he wrote was all his own."

-On Cowley's Death and Burial. Sir John Denham.

"We have many things that he writ in two very unlike conditions, in the University and the Court. But in his poetry, as well as his life, he mingled with excellent skill what was good in both states. In his life he joined the innocence and sincerity of the scholar with the humanity and good behaviour of the courtier. In his poems he united the solidity and art of the one, with the gentility and gracefulness of the other."

-The Life and Writings of Cowley. T. Sprat.

"To my booksellers . . . and do hear Mr Cowley mightily lamented his death, by Dr Ward, the Bishop of Winchester, and Dr Bates, who were standing there, as the best poet of our nation and as good a man."

-Pepys' Diary, Aug. 12, 1667.

"To add and to diminish what we please . . . ought only to be granted to Mr Cowley, and that too only in his translation of Pindar; because he alone was able to make him amends, by giving him better of his own, whenever he refused his author's thoughts."

-Preface to Ovid's Epistles. Dryden.

"Though he (Cowley) must always be thought a great poet, he is no longer esteemed a good writer."

-Preface to Fables. Dryden.

"One glittering thought no sooner strikes our eyes
With silent wonder, but new wonders rise:
As in the milky way a shining white
O'erflows the heav'ns with one continued light;
That not a single star can shew his rays,
Whilst jointly all promote the common blaze."

—Account of English Poets. Addison.

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"There is . . . a kind of wit which consists partly in the resemblance of ideas and partly in the resemblance of words, which, for distinction sake, I shall call mixed wit. This kind of wit is that which abounds in Cowley more than in any author that ever wrote. . . :

"I cannot conclude . . . without owning that the admirable author, out of whom I have taken the examples of it, had as much true wit as any author that ever writ; and, indeed,

all other talents of an extraordinary genius."

-The Spectator, No. 62.

"Who now reads Cowley? if he pleases, yet His moral pleases, not his pointed wit. Forgot his epic, nay, Pindaric art, Yet still we love the language of his heart."

-Pone

"In the general review of Cowley's poetry it will be found that he wrote with abundant fertility, but negligent or unskilful selection; with much thought but little imagery; that he is never pathetic, and rarely sublime; but always either ingenious or learned, either acute or profound. . . .

"He was in his own time considered as of unrivalled excellence. Clarendon represents him as having taken a flight beyond all that went before him; and Milton is said to have declared that the three greatest English poets were

Spenser, Shakespeare, and Cowley.

"His manner he had in common with others; but his sentiments were his own. Upon every subject he thought for himself; and such was his copiousness of knowledge, that something at once remote and applicable rushed into his mind. . . .

"His diction was in his own time censured as negligent.
... He makes no selection of words, nor seeks any neatness of phrase; he has no elegance, either lucky or elaborate.
... He has, indeed, many noble lines, such as the feeble care of Waller never could produce. The bulk of his thoughts sometimes swelled his verse to unexpected and inevitable

grandeur; but his excellence of this kind is merely fortuitous.

"The fault of Cowley, and perhaps of all the writers of the metaphysical race, is that of pursuing his thoughts to their last ramifications, by which he loses the grandeur of generality."

-From the Lives of the Poets. Samuel Johnson.

"In Cowley there is an inexhaustible fund of sense and ingenuity, buried in inextricable conceits, and entangled in the cobwebs of the schools. He was a great man, not a great poet."

—Hazlitt.

"Shall I be thought fantastical if I confess that the names of some of our poets sound sweeter, and have a finer relish to the ear — to mine at least — than that of Milton or of Shakespeare? . . . The sweetest names, and which carry a perfume in the mention are, Kit Marlowe, Drayton, Drummond of Hawthornden, and Cowley."

-Charles Lamb.

""Who now reads Cowley?" Pope asked the question, having himself read Cowley with great care, and having some interest in dissuading his own readers from doing so; but I had fondly imagined that as no one now reads Pope, the fashion had swung back again to Cowley. I suppose I am wrong. Let me then attempt to revive the recollection of a man of genius."

-Conferences on Books and Men. H. C. Beeching.

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